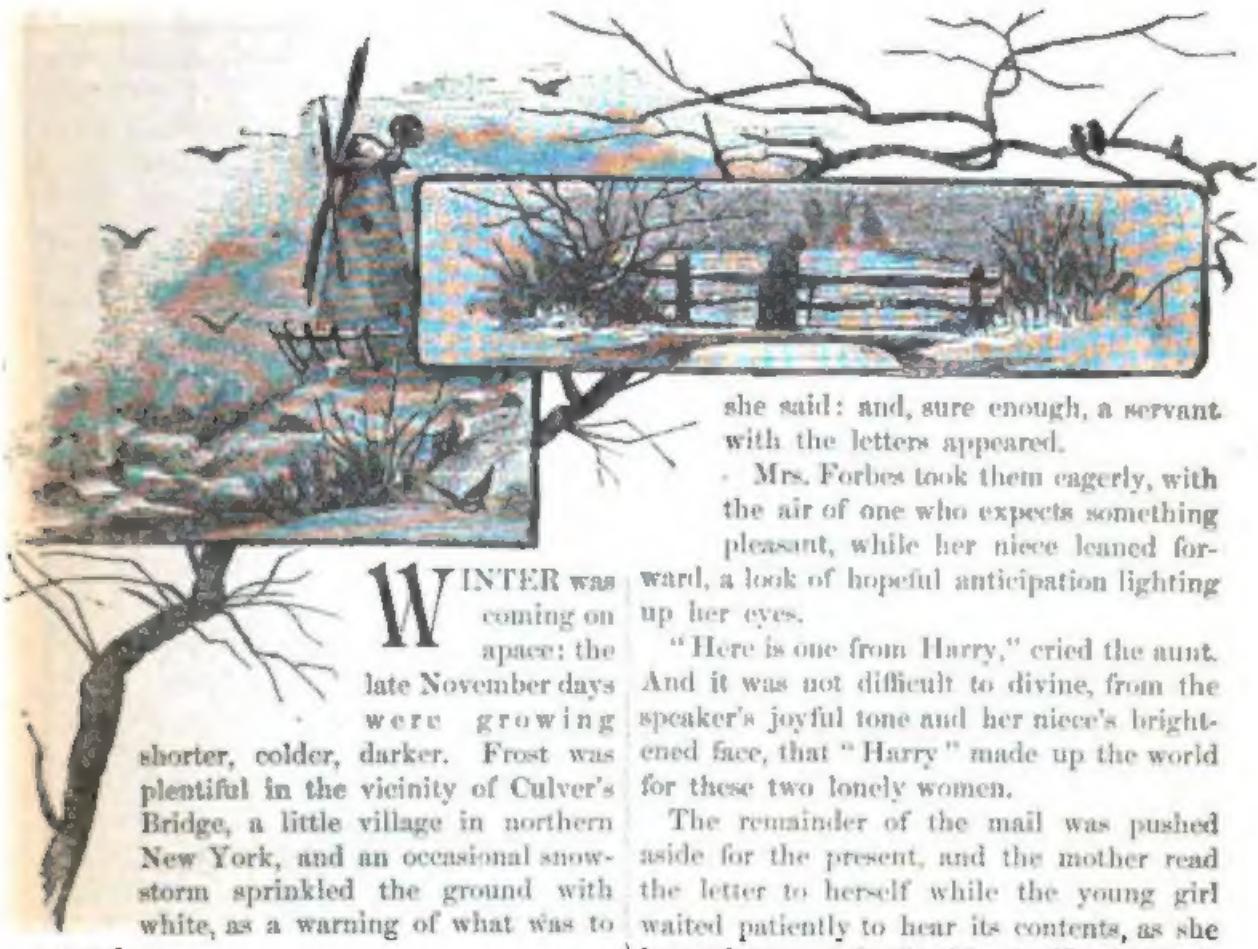


WITH THE NEW YEAR.

BY KATHARINE ALLEN.



WINTER was coming on apace; the late November days were growing shorter, colder, darker. Frost was plentiful in the vicinity of Culver's Bridge, a little village in northern New York, and an occasional snow-storm sprinkled the ground with white, as a warning of what was to come later.

To Mrs. Forbes and her niece, Janet Wilmot, in their great gloomy house outside the village, the approaching winter looked somewhat dreary.

On one of the dullest of these November days, the two ladies sat over a wood-fire in Mrs. Forbes's dressing-room. They were there from choice; the place was so much cozier than the huge library, which even the blaze of the pine logs in the grate could not render cheerful. The elder, a mild-faced low-voiced woman, with a certain look of iron determination about her mouth when it was closed, was knitting; while the younger, a rather plain girl of twenty, was busy with her embroidery.

"It is nearly time for James to bring the mail," remarked Mrs. Forbes, glancing up at the mantel-clock; and, just then, a knock at the door seemed to answer her. "Come in,"

she said; and, sure enough, a servant with the letters appeared.

Mrs. Forbes took them eagerly, with the air of one who expects something pleasant, while her niece leaned forward, a look of hopeful anticipation lighting up her eyes.

"Here is one from Harry," cried the aunt. And it was not difficult to divine, from the speaker's joyful tone and her niece's brightened face, that "Harry" made up the world for these two lonely women.

The remainder of the mail was pushed aside for the present, and the mother read the letter to herself while the young girl waited patiently to hear its contents, as she knew she presently should. As Mrs. Forbes's eye ran down the sheet, she gave a cry of joy.

"He is coming home, Janet! he is coming home!" she exclaimed, leaning eagerly toward her niece. "The firm want some business transacted in America, and they have decided to send him on to do it, as he hasn't had a vacation for three years," she continued, glancing on through the letter.

"I am so glad," said Janet, quietly; but there was real pleasure in her tones, and the other knew it. It was not Janet's way, to show excitement.

"He will be home before Christmas," went on the reader. "Just think of what a merry Christmas it will be, and what a happy New-Year's we shall have, with my boy here!"

The reading of the letter took much time,



and then it had to be re-read on several successive mornings. The winter days no longer seemed dull or dreary—there was so much to do and plan and talk about. The two women were perfectly happy.

December slipped rapidly by, and the day before Christmas came. The voyage from India took so long, that the time of young Forbes's arrival was uncertain; but he expected to reach home by the twenty-fourth at the latest. The mother was terribly nervous, and even Janet found her usually patient spirit growing restless. So she made an errand to the village, and started forth well equipped for her cold two-mile walk. No

snow had fallen lately, but the trees of the wood by which she passed on her way to Culver's Bridge were bare, and the fence that rose between her and the wind-tossed leafless pines was white with frost. She felt glad of her thick fur-trimmed ulster and warm gloves.

Janet neared the village and saw a young man coming toward her. As the two approached, they looked into each other's face, and, after a hesitation, clasped hands.

"Harry!"

"My dear Janet! I should have known you anywhere."

"And I you," she rejoined.

"But mother—"

"She is well—anxiously expecting you," answered Janet.

"Dear mother! I did not telegraph because I had to stop a day to see the firm in New York, and I wasn't certain how long I might be. Then, too, I remembered the difficulties of telegraphic communication with this dead-and-alive village."

Janet laughed.

"We are behind the times, I admit; but I love the old place, in spite of its slowness."

The walk home did not seem so long, to Janet, as that to the village had been. She and her cousin found plenty to talk about. At length they reached the house, and she hastened to send a man after her cousin's luggage, while he rushed up to see his mother. That meeting, who can describe?

The week which stretched between Christmas and New-Year's was a season of perfect bliss to the two women, and certainly a happy one to the young man. The last day of the year came, and in the afternoon Janet went over to the little church, to a children's festival. Mother and son were alone together, and the latter concluded it would be a good opportunity to open a subject of which he was anxious to speak.

"Mother," he said, "you and I must talk business; I do not understand the way in which my father's affairs were settled up. You said he left little but the house; have I sent you enough to keep it up?"

"You have been very generous, my dear boy; but wait for a day or two before we discuss business—there is plenty of time for that."

This was exactly what her son wished.

"Mother," he began. There was a certain hesitation about his speech, unusual with him. He stood leaning against the mantel. They were in Mrs. Forbes's dressing-room, which opened into her bed-room. A cabinet, covered now with curiosities brought by Harry from India, hung on the wall back of him. His mother sat in her favorite chair by a little table. She was looking up into his face, not without a certain anxiety. "Mother," he repeated, "I suppose I seem rather young to marry; but I am twenty-four, and—"

It was not at all the way he had intended to begin; but he must go on, and his mother helped him:

"My dear, I believe in early marriages—your father was only twentythree when he married me."

"Of course, I don't mean just yet—right away," Harry hurried on; "but next year, if all shall go well, the firm intend to give me a small share in the business, they are so pleased with my success. Then I could come home and work in New York. We are prospering famously—I should have a well-assured income of three or four thousand. Don't you think I might support a wife too, on that?"

"It would depend on the wife," answered his mother. She leaned one elbow on the table as she spoke, while the other hand rested in her lap. She was looking up into her son's face with an anxious expression.

In his nervousness, Harry put one hand in his pocket; the other he placed eagerly but tenderly on his mother's shoulder, as he bent toward her and said fervently:

"Mother, she is the dearest, noblest girl that ever breathed—only I have so little to offer her."

"If she loves you—but, Harry, her name—you have not told me it," and the speaker bent forward with repressed impatience.

"Her name is—Beatrice Thoroughby."

A silence fell between the two—a silence that could be felt. Mrs. Forbes sank wearily back in her chair and closed her eyes. She looked suddenly old and tired. Her son did not understand. His praises of Beatrice died on his lips before this inexplicable change in his mother. She opened her eyes—her voice was cold and hard.

"Forgive me, my son, if I am disappointed," she said; "I had hoped it might be—Janet. This house belongs to her—everything; if she had not bought it in, it would have gone to your father's creditors." Mrs. Forbes rose as she spoke. "I had hoped to die here," she went on, "and I shall—a little sooner or a little later: what does it matter?"

"Mother!"

"And you can marry that girl."

"Never, mother, never, till I have saved money enough to buy this house for you. Besides, I am not at all sure that Beatrice cares for me—I have known her such a short time, I have never dared ask her."

A sudden gleam of satisfaction lighted his mother's eyes.

"Ah!" she involuntarily exclaimed; then, with a visible effort, she added: "I will hear what you have to tell me."

It was soon told. Young Forbes had met Beatrice Thoroughby while on his last vacation, in the hill country. She was the daughter of a British army officer stationed at Allahabad; poor, but of good family. He repeated that he had known her for so brief a season, he had never actually made love to her, and then there followed his lover's-raptures over her perfections.

When he finished, his mother explained the condition of his father's affairs. The elder Forbes had died suddenly, soon after Harry went to India, and the son could not come back without losing his position. His mother had begged him to remain, assuring him she could attend to everything with the assistance of a lawyer friend. She had not written him about the house because she feared it might bring him home, and that would have done no good. The conversation was interrupted by Janet's return, and the mother and son tried to be cheerful.



That night, the two cousins watched the old year out and the new year in. They were rather silent. The young man was thinking deeply.

What could he do? He had always idolized his mother, and she was so fragile—how could he thwart her? The property was worth a great many thousands. It would be years before he could hope to save enough to buy it, and, in the meantime, Beatrice—how could he expect her to wait all her life for him, even if he might hope that she returned his love?

And Janet—had not his mother hinted at her caring for him? Could it be? To be sure, she had been glad to see him; but was it any deeper feeling than a sister might show? He could not tell. But he owed so much to her on his mother's account, that, if it were true she cared, what ought he to do?

The remainder of Harry's stay was a silent torment to both mother and son. She was consumed with anxiety. Would he persist in his determination to try and win that English girl? And, on his side, he was struggling with fate. The day before he went away, he said to his cousin:

"We have always been fond of each other, Janet; but—do you care for me enough to be my wife? It is my mother's dearest wish, as well as—mine."

"Yes," murmured Janet: "if you want me to be."

And then he kissed her tenderly.

"I cannot ask you to marry me for a long while, Janet," he hurried on. "My mother tells me you are an heiress, and I could not ask you to marry so poor a man as I."

"I am quite content to wait," his cousin answered.

So they parted affectionately, though hardly like lovers; and Harry sailed for India, leaving his mother happy.

Life went on in the old way with the two women.

On his arrival in Calcutta, Harry found that Major Thoroughby had been ordered to England, so he did not see Beatrice again. It was all for the best, he told himself.

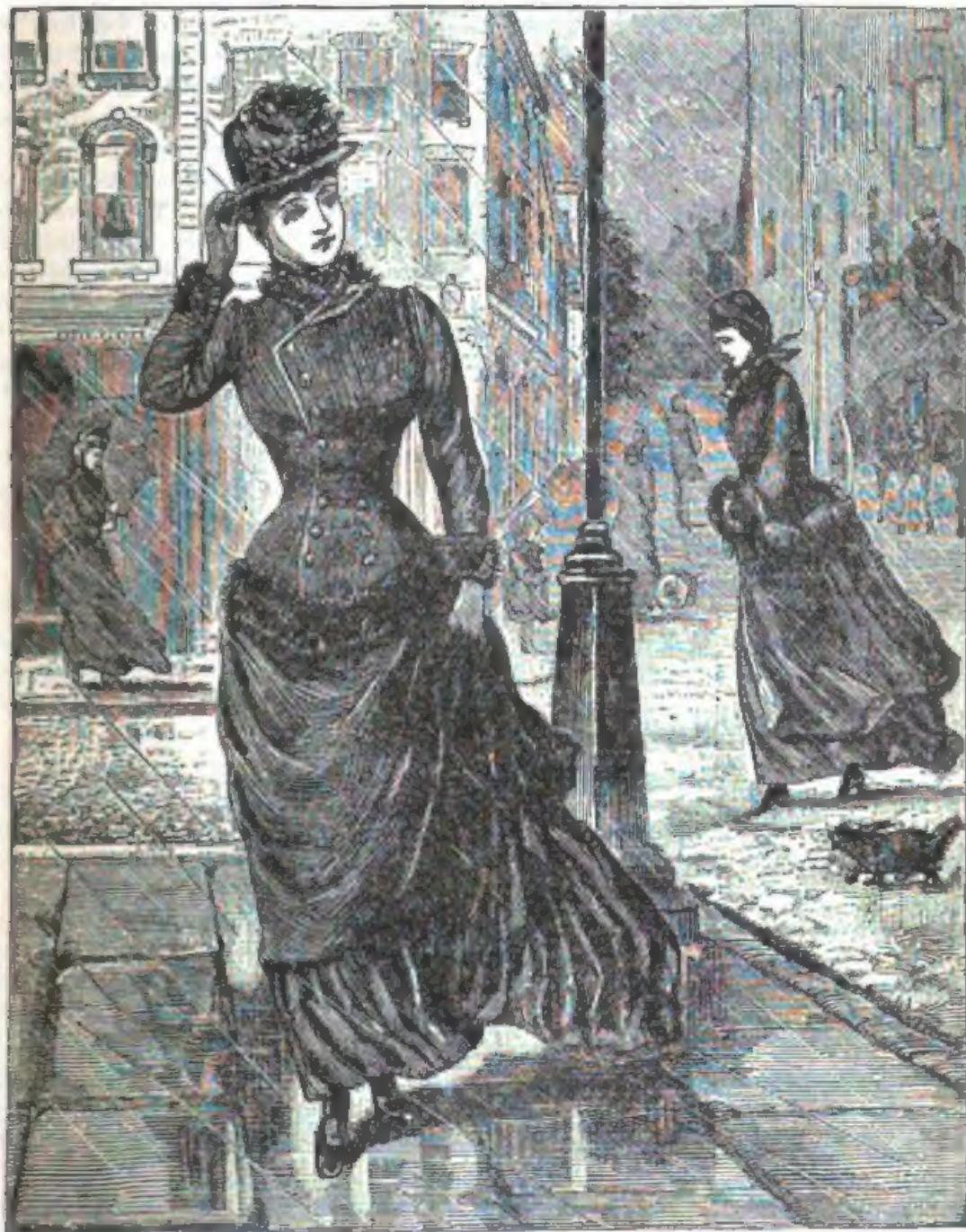
Nearly three years passed, and then

Harry went back to America—his mother was dead. He had never cared to come before, except for a visit; but he could not leave Janet alone, after she had spent the flower of her youth waiting for him.

"Mightn't we be married at once?" he asked.

heard regularly from Janet. At last, he made up his mind that the only cure for him was marriage—then he would forget. So he wrote to Miss Wilmot: "I am coming for you." And she did not forbid him.

On the day of his arrival in London, Janet said to him with perfect composure:



But Janet begged to wait. She wanted to go abroad for awhile with a widowed friend. So they parted once more, and Harry slowly made his preparations for transfer to the New York business-house. If he meant to marry, he knew he must leave India.

Almost a year went by, during which he

"My dear boy, I have always known that you did not love me as a man should the woman he intends to marry. Of late, I have come to believe that you love someone else. You are free to wed her." And she gave him his ring.

"Do you think I would be contemptible

enough to accept my freedom, Janet, unless you tell me you do not care for me?" cried Harry.

But Janet was inexorable.

"I have not fallen so low as to marry a man who does not love me," she said, haughtily. Then, before he could recover from his astonishment, she calmly added: "You were going for a walk—will you kindly take this note to my friend Mrs. Armbrustar? Her address is on the envelope. Now, don't let's talk any more at present: think matters over, and you will see that I am right."

A few moments later, Harry was making his way up Piccadilly. It was a stormy December afternoon; rain, hail, and sleet combined to make unfortunate pedestrians utterly miserable. As he walked rapidly on, he saw a figure turn the opposite corner—a familiar figure—one that made his heart leap madly, even after all these years. A moment later, he stood in front of Beatrice Thoroughby. When the first greetings were over, he explained where he was going.

"Mrs. Armbrustar—Belgrave Square?" cried Beatrice. "Why, Mrs. Armbrustar is my aunt, with whom I live now. I was just on my way to your cousin's: she and I are the best of friends. I felt rather out of spirits, and she always cheers me up."

Then Harry knew what Janet had done.

The next few weeks were delightful: the major, a fine-looking man of forty-five, was at home on a furlough, and the four were constantly together. Janet did not seem unhappy, though she steadily refused to hear of any renewal of the engagement.

When New-Year's Day came, and in answer to his cousin's whispered "You have something to tell me?" Harry murmured the blissful story of Beatrice's love, she answered, a queer little glint of joy shining through the tears in her eyes:

"It is very odd—but I shall be your stepmother-in-law: I have promised to marry the major."

It was all exceedingly astonishing, but Harry was consoled: and, to four people at least, an unexpected happiness came WITH THE NEW YEAR.

THE PASSING BELL.

BY H. D. CASTLE.

RING softly, solemn bell—
Say "Death is here!"
Sweet silvery sadness swell
Over the bier;
Toll softly, solemn bell,
For the dead year.

No summer breeze to sigh,
No flowers to bring—
Cold as the snow you lie;
Ring, sad bells, ring!

No look like laughing spring
On your dead face—
Of summer's ripening
Beauty and grace,
Of autumn's harvesting,
Never a trace.

Always, when wild winds blow
Shrilling and shrill,
When the cold silent snow
Lie like a chill,
When midnight shadows grow
Awfully still,

Death lays his silent spell!
On the Old Year.
Ring softly, solemn bell—
Say "Death is here!"

Ring gladly, happy bell—
Ring loud and clear!
Darkness and gloom dispel—
Lo! dawn is near!
Ring! the glad tidings tell!
"Happy New Year!"

"Happy New Year" to thee,
Lovingly given;
Thine to use rightfully—
Fresh gift from heaven;

Thine, with its budding spring;
Thine, with its June;
Thine, with its harvesting—
Sow for it soon.

"Happy New Year" for thee
Blessings to bring:
High hearts beat hopefully—
Ring, glad bells, ring!

D R. PAXTON'S NEW-YEAR'S CALL.

BY MRS. IRENE FOSTER.

"JANUARY 1st, 1880.

DEAR HARRY: I am laid up with a broken leg, and must turn over my patients to your care. Enclosed find list with names, addresses, course of treatment, etc.

GEORGE HOVEY."

This was the note that Dr. Harry Paxton stood perusing, with a downcast face and clouded brow, on New-Year's morning, not many years ago. Harry Paxton was twenty-six, handsome and talented, possessed a good income independent of his practice, was a favorite in society, and had a long list of lady friends, upon whom he might call on New-Year's Day. On the morning in question, Dr. Paxton had gone his professional rounds very early, and had returned home to make a proper toilet for the usual round of New-Year's calls, when his office-boy handed him the missive quoted above.

"Confound it all!" he muttered. "Why couldn't George wait until to-morrow to break his leg? And what a list! Rheumatism, pneumonia—hem! hem! here is one that sounds interesting: Miss Gordon, No. 89 Newton Street; lung-fever. Dear me, what a detailed description of treatment! Well, I suppose I must go, and cut down my calls to a few this evening."

In every youthful heart, though the tender love that makes a life may not yet have come, there is ever one face, one voice, upon which the fancy lingers, as a little brighter, a little sweeter, than other faces or voices can ever be. To Harry Paxton, this memory was the face and voice of Mary Livingston, a blonde beauty, and only daughter of one of the leading merchants of the city.

As yet, love had not come to either heart, yet it is certain the pretty blonde accepted the attentions of the young doctor willingly. Just a society flirtation so far, but one likely to become something more; for Dr. Paxton was heir expectant to a wealthy maiden aunt, and Mary Livingston had been well taught as to the necessity of securing a "handsome establishment." The sparkle of her blue eyes was the magnet that hurried

the doctor on his round of professional calls till he stood at the door of the last patient, Miss Gordon.

In a darkened room, where poverty had set her ugly seal, yet where some of those heart-rending relics of better days lingered yet, the doctor was ushered by an elderly woman, a gentlewoman in the true sense of the word, who bore the traces of sorrow on her sad face and looked with pitiful anxiety for his directions.

"She seems much worse since last evening," she said; "the delirium continues, though she is so weak she can hardly speak."

The doctor approached the bed. A face, thin yet exquisitely delicate in every outline and feature, fever-flushed, with large black eyes unnaturally brilliant, met his gaze—a face stricken by illness, wasted and worn, yet the most beautiful, in all its pain, his eyes had ever rested upon. While he felt the rapid pulse, bent low to listen to the murmurs of the delirious fancy, a knock at the door summoned the mother away. It was impossible, in the deep stillness of the room, to avoid hearing the conversation between the new-comer and Mrs. Gordon.

"You have an answer to my note?" the lady said, eagerly.

"No, ma'am; Miss Livingston was dressing for callers, and couldn't be bothered."

"She sent me some money, James—just a dollar or two?"

"No, ma'am; you must wait till next month."

"Did she read the note?"

"Yes, ma'am, I seed her read it while the man was dressing of her hair; and I told her, ma'am, how awful sick Miss Hattie was, but she said I was an impudence, and might talk when I was asked. She is a proud one."

"Well, James, you can do no more."

"But ain't I to go for the medicines and the wine?"

"No—there, never mind."

It was a whole tragedy to Harry Paxton's kind heart. Was the mother seeking charity? Or did the blonde beauty, who haunted all

his dreams, owe her rightful payment? Either way, his idol was dimmed by the words of the errand-boy.

Yet he felt instinctively that charity from a stranger would not be accepted here. The face of the elder lady, through all its sadness and gentleness, was proud; and every tone of the low voice showed education and refinement.

No money, and the patient wanted medicines and stimulants. A bright thought flashed over Harry Paxton's mind. "Mrs. Gordon," he said, turning his eyes delicately from the tearful face, "your daughter needs a medicine I do not like to trust a druggist to prepare from a written prescription; I will return in an hour, and administer the first dose myself."

Whether she understood the delicate kindness or not, Mrs. Gordon's grateful eyes sufficiently thanked the young physician, who hurried away, soon returning with the medicines and wine. More than two hours slipped away while the doctor watched his patient, studying the effect of his medicines and finally being rewarded by seeing her fall into a quiet slumber.

It was too late, when he reached home again, to make any calls; and, as he sat by his cheery grate, he dreamed, not of Mary's golden curla, but of the pale sweet face of Miss Gordon.

It saddened him to think of a coffin-lid hiding it forever from the mother's loving eyes, and yet he knew that she was hovering very close to the borders of the future life.

His first call, the next day, was at the house of his patient, and by the glad eyes of the mother he knew the life-giving sleep had been prolonged and followed by consciousness. Very weak and very ill she was yet; but there was hope now, and Harry Paxton wondered that this fact should so lighten his heart, when, but twenty-four hours before, he had never even heard of Miss Gordon.

But, in his morning travels, a little phaeton passed him, paused till he came up, and Mary Livingston, leaning forward, held out her hand to the handsome doctor.

"You don't deserve to be spoken to," she said, "for you should have followed your bouquet yesterday."

"I was only too sorry I could not," was the reply. "One of my friends broke a

bone, and kindly turned over his patients to me."

"Sickness is a horrid bore: I am out now hunting up a substitute for my dressmaker, who sends me word she has lung-fever. I dare say it is only a cold; but, in the meantime, I must find someone else. Shocking, isn't it? Do come to see us soon." And, after a few more parting words, Mary carried her blue eyes from Harry's vision.

It was a debt, then: she owed the money she had refused to send to the sick girl. All the glamor faded at once and forever from Harry Paxton's heart. It was impossible for a man whose every action was controlled by honor and Christianity to give even admiration to a woman for whom he felt no respect, and Harry Paxton was conscious of a feeling of bitter contempt for Mary, as the phaeton bore her out of sight.

It was with a new interest that he found his way, toward evening, to Hattie Gordon's sick-room; and, when her eyes met his, full of gratitude, and a whisper thanked him, he wondered how he had ever seen any beauty in the fair face of Mary Livingston.

But that young beauty did not propose to lose her admirer so easily. Old Miss Paxton, the doctor's aunt, had taken the blonde upon her list of special favorites, and it was astonishing how often the gay beauty found an excuse to visit her elderly friend; and often Harry was there, ever courteous and pleasant, but never again with that air and voice that had once told Mary her charms were winning their way to the young doctor's heart.

It troubled him, too, that his aunt had set her heart upon a match between himself and Mary; for he dearly loved his aunt, and was loth to cross any of her wishes. So, not wishing to make any violent rupture, Harry, one evening in early spring, said:

"Auntie, do you remember once wishing you could replace your old companion—Miss Beemis?"

"Yes—but I never can. And, when you are married, Harry, your wife will share our home."

"Very true. In the meantime, auntie, I have a patient who has been very ill with lung-fever, and whose sole support is her needle. She is not strong enough yet to follow her trade of dressmaking, and I was thinking, if you could find a place for her

and make her useful, it would be a charity and might prove a comfort here also."

"Who is she, Harry?"

"Miss Hattie Gordon."

"Gordon? What Gordon?"

"Her father's name was James, and I believe they were wealthy once."

"James Gordon's child? Dressmaking?" cried Aunt Paxton. "And Maria—his wife, I mean—is she dead?"

"No; but they are very, very poor. Do you know her?"

"Know her? She was my dearest friend for years, until she married and went West. Then I lost sight of her. Where are they? I will call to-day."

"You are the best aunt in the world!"

"Hum! yes! It seems to me, you are wonderfully interested, Doctor Harry. Is Miss Hattie pretty?"

"Lovely—and so gentle and good."

Then Harry told of his New-Year's call; of the permission to make social visits, after professional ones were no longer needed; and how his interest deepened in the sweet girl.

"She is very delicate yet," he said, "and needs freedom from wearing anxiety."

"She shall have it. And, Harry, if she is the refined sweet woman her mother was, I will speed the wooing."

Two weeks later, Miss Mary Livingston, being about to prepare an outfit for her summer campaign, bethought her of the forty dollars she owed Hattie Gordon, resolved to pay it, and so pave the way

for a new order. But Miss Gordon was not at home. "Gene with her mother, to visit some friends," her landlady told Miss Livingston, who re-entered her carriage in no amiable frame of mind.

"She had such exquisite taste, and fitted me to perfection, and worked for a mere nothing," thought that ill-used young lady, as she drove in the direction of Miss Paxton's. "I'll ask that old maid who makes her dresses—though I suppose they cost a small fortune."

Miss Paxton was at home, the servant informed Mary—and she, being a privileged visitor, went at once to the sitting-room. At the door, she paused, seeing a lady seated near the window and at Miss Paxton's feet.

"Oh, Miss Gordon!" she said. "I have just been to your house, to see if you could make me some new dresses and to pay you a trifle I owe you."

"Miss Gordon," observed Miss Paxton, dryly, "has given up dressmaking; but the trifle will be quite convenient toward providing her trousseau. You are the first to hear of the engagement, Mary; but you may say, on my authority, that we are to have a wedding in the summer, when Hattie will become the wife of my nephew Harry."

Very sweetly Miss Livingston made her congratulatory speech and paid her bill; but, in her carriage, the pretty blonde shed spiteful tears under her veil, muttering:

"So that was the reason Harry Paxton staid away from my New-Year's reception and has behaved so oddly ever since."

TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY.

BY CARRIE F. L. WHEELER.

The blackbirds piped in the budding copse.
The hills were blurred with the soft spring rain;
We walked together the garden close
And listened the robin's glad refrain;
The shining hosts of the daffodils
Bent low to the south-wind's sweet caress.
And their subtle balm and the robin's song
Seemed one with our new-found happiness.
How can a world so green, so green,
Turn to a world so gray, so gray?
Oh, this is the world of to-day, and that
Was the world of yesterday!

There is dreary snow in the garden close
Where the lavished gold of the daffodils
Mute sunshine then, and a mournful mist
Blurs all the light in the distant hills;
I miss the clasp of a tender hand;
We walk together and yet apart;
The chill of winter is on the land,
The chill of winter is in my heart.
At dawn of spring, the flowers shall rise
To bud and blossom above decay—
Never a morrow brings bud or bloom
To the love of yesterday!

A MAGNIFICENT MARRIAGE.

BY LUCY H. HOOPER.

CHAPTER I. THE TRAMP.



FRANCE is apt to be proud of her forests, and though to American eyes, used to the gigantic trees that flourish even in the more anciently peopled parts of the United States, these vaunted woods seem of limited extent and composed of trees of ordinary dimensions, they furnish a delightful variety to the landscape in many parts of the land. Amongst the most noted and important of these forests is the one that occupies a wide expanse of ground in the district of the Loiret, and, as there is no city of even second-rate dimensions within easy reach of its verdure and its cool shadows, it has preserved a character of wildness that most of its rivals have totally lost. Several ancient chateaux, belonging to members of the scattered remnants of the old nobility, are situated on its borders, and derive most of their attractiveness, amidst their faded grandeur, from the proximity of those shady avenues and groves. There are deer and wild boars to be found within its precincts during the hunting season, but no noxious reptiles except a stray viper or two. But, like all secluded spots, whether in Europe or America, the beautiful forest affords shelter from time to time to that most disagreeable form of vermin, the human tramp.

One of these gentry, at the period that our story opens, lay asleep at the foot of a spreading oak, one balmy afternoon in the month of September. He was tired-looking even in his sleep, and dirty and disreputable in clothing and in aspect as the average tramp is apt to be. But the sinewy arms tossed above his head, the massive chest, and the stalwart legs extended on the turf, gave evidence of unusual strength, which fasting and fatigue might have diminished, but had not wholly destroyed. His slumbers were restless in spite of his apparent weariness; he

tossed from side to side on his uneven couch of moss, and muttered unceasingly to himself, from time to time. The notes of a hunting-horn in the distance, sounding a recall to the hounds, aroused him thoroughly at last. He started up, rubbed his eyes, and looked around him. A bird that had been spying his movements from a neighboring bough took fright and flew away, and a rabbit on the other side of the road popped hastily into his hole; but no human being was at hand to note the man's awakening. The tramp sat up and wiped his forehead with the ragged remains of an old plaid handkerchief, which he drew from his battered hat. Again the notes of the horn were audible, but this time still farther away.

"I thought that I couldn't be mistaken," he muttered. "The huntmen are calling back the dogs—that is all. Whew! what a fright they have given me. I was certain they had caught me again—just after I had made my escape, too. I never had much luck, and I know that the police are at my heels. Hey!—what's that?"

A sound of voices and of laughter came wafted down the road. The tramp jumped up and hastened to hide himself behind the trunk of one of the larger trees. A group of peasants, men and women, in holiday garb, went past, laughing and singing. No one perceived him in his hiding-place. They were all intent on the gayety and sociability of the hour.

"Coming from the fair," he said to himself, as he came cautiously from behind the tree and listened to the renewed bursts of laughter that were dying away in the distance. "They are not dangerous, those creatures. They have no idea of hunting down a wretched vagabond like myself. How gay they are! Well dressed and well fed and comfortable, and, as for me, I have not tasted food for twenty-four hours, neither have I a single copper to buy me a bit of bread. One must eat, however. Somehow or another, I must manage to get hold of something—eatables or money, or perhaps both."

He laid hold of a vigorous sapling which grew near the tree under which he had taken his siesta, and tried to break it off near the roots; but the tough young trunk resisted all his efforts.

"Wait!" he cried, drawing from under his coat a long sharp knife with a broad blade and tapering point. "It's a good thing that I've had my knife well sharpened. One never knows what may happen."

He attacked the sapling energetically, and soon succeeded in severing the tough fibres. Just as he pulled the severed trunk away, a strong grasp on his shoulder caused him to start and to drop his new acquisition, though he still kept hold of his knife. A powerful-looking man, in the uniform of a forest-guard, stood beside him, with one of his comrades close at hand.

"What are you doing here?" quoth the guard that still held him by the shoulder. "Mutilating and destroying the trees, eh? Don't you know that that is against the law?"

The tramp wriggled himself loose from the grip of the guard.

"I had hurt my foot," he said, in an humble deprecating tone. "I was just cutting a stick, to use as a cane to help me on my way. I didn't mean to do any harm."

"A stick? Yes, a nice stick, I should say: one of our best saplings; a young oak, at that."

"I didn't know!" whined the tramp. "If I had known—"

"Well, now that you do know," said the guard, who was a kind-hearted man in the main, "get out, and see that you do nothing of the kind any more."

"If the prince had happened to come this way," joined in the second guard, "you would not have been let off so easily."

"The prince? What prince?" asked the tramp, with eager curiosity.

"Why, the Prince de Valdora, to be sure! Don't you know that all this part of the forest belongs to his estate? And just now he is out with a hunting-party. So you had better be off as quick as you can."

"I'm going—yes, I'm going—and I'm much obliged to you gentlemen for letting me know." And, limping as demonstratively as possible, he started off down the path, watching the guards furtively as he did so. In consequence, he failed to see another

party of the forest-guardians who were coming down the path from the opposite side. Against the leader of these—a tall fine-looking elderly man, with a military bearing—the unfortunate tramp ran with all the momentum of his sudden movements and rapid gait.

"Bother take you, fellow!" exclaimed the new-comer, rubbing his shins, which had been damaged by the shock. "Couldn't you look where you were going?"

"Beg pardon. I didn't see—"

A group of peasants, headed by a well-to-do-looking old farmer in his holiday clothes, came up at that moment, and the tramp took advantage of the diversion caused by their coming to shamble off as fast as possible, and he was soon lost to sight among the trees.

"Not a nice-looking party by any means," said the old farmer, shrugging his shoulders.

"Do you know who he is, father Matthew?" asked one of the guards.

"I? No, indeed! He's a stranger in this part of the country, I should say: a regular bad one, to judge by his face."

"Yes, he's an ugly-looking customer," remarked a stout, rosy-faced, middle-aged woman who had come up with Farmer Matthew. "I'll just sit down here and rest a bit, and make sure he is well out of the way before I start."

"As you like, Madame Jacqueline," timidly said one of the younger members of the party. "But you know it is growing late, and you have the dinner to make ready for the prince and his friends, and so—"

"I left the dinner all prepared," remarked Madame Jacqueline, settling herself comfortably on a smooth bank overgrown with moss. "And, after dinner, the prince and his friend, the Count d'Anglade, will sit down to cards as usual, and they'll want nothing more before midnight. I have plenty of time."

"By the bye," remarked the military-looking guard, "have you heard the news?"

"Not I, Monsieur Martin. I've been at the fair ever since breakfast-time, and I'm as ignorant as a carp. What is it?"

"Why, the prince—our prince, Madame Jacqueline—saved the life of the Count d'Anglade at the hunt this afternoon!"

"You don't say so! How was it?"

"Why, the dogs had started the biggest and most savage old wild boar that I have seen

in these woods for many a year. And, just as they had brought the beast to bay, the count's horse took fright, threw his rider, and started off at full gallop, leaving his master right in the way of the furious old tusker, who turned his back on the dogs and made for the count, who was stunned by his fall. It would have been all up with him in a moment, if the Prince de Valdora had not forced his horse to take a leap right over half the pack and turned the boar aside with a shot from his pistol, and finally he was killed without doing any more harm. The count is none the worse, I believe, except for the shock."

"That was well done of the prince. The two gentlemen will be greater friends than ever, now."

Just then, a scream in a woman's voice, sounding from a short distance, startled the talkers.

"What's that?" cried the guard Martin, laying his hand on the hilt of his hunting-knife.

Another shriek was heard, closer at hand, and then a pretty young peasant-woman, pale and panting, came rushing down the road, followed by several other persons.

"What's the matter, Mariette?" asked Farmer Matthew, as she came up to him and caught him by the arm, as if to claim his protection. "What has happened, to make you turn so white and to tremble so?"

The girl tried to speak, but an hysterical burst of sobbing cut short her utterance.

"I'm sure I can't think what ails her," said a sturdy young fellow, a peasant like herself, who arrived at that moment. "We were all coming back from the fair as peaceable as you please, but Mariette kept lagging behind to pick up chestnuts. I told her to hurry up, half a dozen times; but she would keep after the chestnuts, and so we got a good bit ahead of her. And, the next thing we knew, we heard her screaming like mad, and she came up at a run, and we all ran after her, and that's all I know."

"Oh, Jacques—if you only knew—" sobbed the girl, who was gradually recovering her power of speech.

"How are any of us to know, if you won't tell us?" interposed Martin, with good-natured roughness. And, by dint of administering to her a little brandy from his pocket-flask and making a seat for her on the grass with his

folded overcoat, the guard contrived, with the help of a little petting and coaxing from Jacqueline, to soothe and tranquillize the agitated girl.

"You see, Monsieur Martin, I have been so frightened—so horribly frightened!"

"And what has scared you, Mariette? Did you see a viper, or meet a wild boar?"

"No, no; but look at my ears—see how they are bleeding. I was stooping down to pick up a fine lot of chestnuts, when suddenly a rough hand jerked my earrings out of my ears and snatched my gold chain and cross from my neck. I started to my feet and screamed, and I just caught a glimpse of a big man making off amongst the trees as hard as he could."

"Had he a stick in his hand?" here interposed one of the guards.

"Yes—I think—I am sure he had."

"That's the fellow who has just gone away from here, I'll wager. I'm sorry we let him off so easily."

It was some little time before poor Mariette entirely recovered from the agitation caused by the scare she had had; and then she fell to shedding tears over the loss of her gold earrings and her cross and chain. However, she finally became calm, and accepted the arm of Jacques to return home, three of the forest-guards also volunteering their services to accompany her. Madame Jacqueline, greatly impressed by the adventure, begged Farmer Matthew to see her back to the chateau, and the guard Martin offered gallantly to act as a supplementary escort. So the whole party set forth, and the glade was left once more to the birds and the rabbits and the glowing silence of the sunset.

Evening came on apace, the rosy tints faded from the western sky, and the shadows deepened and darkened till finally the whole forest was plunged in a dense obscurity, mitigated in the open glades merely by the feeble gleams of the starlight and the pale rays of a crescent moon. The hours wore on, and toward ten o'clock a mass of clouds crept slowly over the heavens, blotting out every ray of light. A roll of distant thunder became audible, and a flash of lightning from time to time pierced the darkness as with an arrow of flame, dispersing it for a moment, only to leave it denser and blacker than before.

The storm was still threatening when a

man, well and showily dressed, with a massive gold chain looped across his gay-colored waistcoat and adorned with a big dangling bunch of trinkets, such as a locket, watch-key, seals, etc., came slowly and wearily down the road. He was of middle age, of good stature, and powerfully built, and he carried in his hand one of those thick club-like sticks which were the fashionable canes in the days of the Directory. Arrived at the centre of the little glade, he stopped short and looked around him.

"Well, I am a fool," he said to himself, as another flash of lightning revealed to him the details of the scene: "to go and lose my way like this, in the heart of the forest and with such a storm rising! Plague take these forest-roads! They all look the one like the other in the daytime, let alone of a dark night! If I could only meet someone of whom I could ask my way; but I don't think there are many promenaders to be found in the woods at this time of night, to say nothing of the storm. Hark! Surely someone moved among those pines to the left!" And, grasping his heavy stick all the more firmly, he planted himself in the middle of the road, to await the arrival of the new-comer. The lightning, which had now become almost incessant, revealed to him an approaching figure which was anything but prepossessing, as it was that of the tramp. The traveler hailed him, however, without hesitation:

"Hey! here, you fellow! What's the nearest road to the village of Valdora?"

"That's hard to describe," said the vagabond, approaching his questioner stealthily. "But, if you'll follow me, I can soon guide you to it." And, as he spoke, he cast an involuntary glance of covetous longing at the new-comer's heavy watch-chain, an expression which the keen-witted traveler noted at once.

"Thanks, much—but I prefer to make my way through the woods alone, by such a night as this. Not that I need fear any chance meetings, with such an ally as this." And, as he spoke, he twirled his stick above his head, windmill-fashion, with infinite strength and dexterity.

"Nothing to be done in that quarter," muttered the tramp, with a second sidelong glance—this time directed to the broad chest and sinewy arms of his interlocutor. Then

he added aloud: "Well, if you won't accept of my assistance, you won't—and there's an end on't."

So speaking, he dived again among the trees and was out of sight in a moment.

"I think you were a fool, Bertrand Claye," said the other, crossly, to himself, as he looked around and realized that he was once more left alone. "Always cautious in the wrong place. Now, if that chap had gone ahead of me, he could have done me no harm. But what's the use thinking about that now? He's far enough off, by this time; so I'll just shelter myself under this big oak and try to get as little wet as possible, and I'll wait there till the storm is over."

It was not a very safe place of refuge, in view of the still continuous flashes of lightning, which might very well have been attracted by the lofty summit of the noble old tree. But Bertrand Claye took no heed of that, for the wide-spreading branches afforded him an almost impenetrable shelter from the rain, which was beginning to fall in torrents. But, among the noises of the storm, the whistling of the rising wind, the patter of the rain upon the foliage, and the now diminishing crashes of the thunder, there rose suddenly a sharp piercing cry as of someone in mortal peril.

"Help! Murder! Help! help!"

"Hello! what's going on over yonder?" cried Claye, rushing off in the direction of the shrieks, which grew louder and more continuous.

"Assassin! assassin! Oh, help—help!"

Just at that moment, as though Providence strove to aid in the detection of the crime, the lightning struck the summit of a lofty pine dried and parched by the sun of an unusually hot summer. The tall gaunt tree flamed like a torch directly in the path that Claye was pursuing, and by this burst of light he saw indistinctly between the tree-trunks the forms of two men clinched and wrangling in a mortal struggle.

CHAPTER II.

A good many years before the date of the commencement of our story, Josiah Deane, of Maizetown, Wisconsin, had hit upon one of the great discoveries of the age. It was only a hair-dye, to be sure—but it was a most marvelous hair-dye. Those who wanted

to change their iron-gray locks to their original jetty hue and silken gloss had only to purchase and to apply the contents of the bottle marked "No. 1." Others, who desired to color their hair of a chestnut-brown, were directed to make use of the liquid enclosed in the flasks labeled "No. 2." No. 3 imparted a rich auburn to the most rebellious tresses, and No. 4 tinged even the darkest locks with the hue of pale-gold. The process was simple and infallible, and the liquids were by no means costly in proportion to their effects. If people, after using any one of these dyes, found, after some months or perhaps years, that the hair so treated was beginning to fall out by the handfuls, that was their concern and not that of the inventor or the vendor of the wonder-working fluids. It was all the better for the trade in false hair—that was all.

It is hardly necessary to state that Mr. Deane coined money by his new and popular invention. He spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in advertising his hair-dye, and he gained millions in return. From an obscure chemist, toiling in the back room of an apothecary's shop in a small Western town, he changed in a few years to one of the so-called "money kings" of the United States. People began to speak of him in the same breath with Vanderbilt and John W. Mackay and the late A. T. Stewart. He passed through the various phases that mark the acquisition of vast wealth late in life by a busy American. He built himself a gigantic palace in his little native town, and then he did not care to live in it, and rented it for a sum that represented a mere fraction of the interest upon its actual cost. He made sundry trips to California and Florida and elsewhere, in a private palace-car, and was rather bored by the process. And finally he made up his mind one day that he would go to Europe, and he incontinently sailed on the following Saturday, from New York, for Havre.

Mr. Deane had been a widower for several years when that fickle jade, fortune, condescended to smile upon him. The wife of his youth had been a true helpmate to him in his days of poverty. She had kept his little home in perfect order, had cooked and washed and sewed for him untiringly, and then, before his labors had borne fruit in the way of solid cash, she had fallen ill of a

fever, and had died after an illness of a few weeks. And, when at last Mr. Deane began to reap the golden reward of his labors, his first thought was: "Now, if only Sarah were here to help me enjoy all this money." But Sarah was not there, and Mr. Deane had no thought of giving her a successor. He was in no sense a society man, so he was not brought into contact with the women of culture and education whose companionship he vaguely craved. Moreover, he was a very busy man, and had no time to go in search of the "not impossible she" that was the one element lacking to the late-won splendors of his life. He was a man well on the shady side of forty when he left the United States for France, and he had been a childless widower for over six years. His distant relatives—second cousins and the like, for he had no near relations—saw reason to congratulate themselves on his apparently fixed state of celibacy, and were wont to remark among themselves that "poor dear Cousin Josiah would never marry again." Probably such was Cousin Josiah's own conviction when, for the first time, he set foot in the gay capital of France and was dazzled by the splendors of Paris under the Second Empire.

His visit took place at the epoch of the Parisian Universal Exhibition of 1867. His hair-dye, built up in the shape of an imposing temple, all formed of bottles, with tresses of hair in all the shades produced by it tastefully woven into a shield-shaped device as the lintel of the temple's doorway, was much admired by the Parisians. Most of them took the capillary part of the exhibit to be a series of scalp-locks captured by the Indian ancestors of the inventor, or perhaps by that gentleman himself. But that was a mistake not unnatural on the part of people whose sole idea of the Americans of North America had been gained from the pages of the novels of Cooper and of Aimard. Mr. Deane, however, troubled himself but little about what the French people thought of him personally. They took to his hair-dye most kindly, and that was all that he wanted. He could not speak one word of the language, and he kept strictly out of the way of all French persons in general. He took his meals in the English restaurant of the Exhibition, went sightseeing with an English valet at his heels, and in all ways comported himself like a true-born and patriotic American.

One day, being invited by an English friend to try some remarkably fine dry sherry on sale at one of the London bars of the Exhibition, Mr. Deane found himself face to face with one of the prettiest women he had ever seen in his life. The beauty of the British bar-maid is proverbial, and Lizzie Willis, who occupied the position of server-in-chief at the luncheon-counter in question, was a singularly lovely specimen of her class. Great dark eyes, cheeks like peaches, and a mouth like a ripe strawberry, a throat white and round as that of a dove, and a figure whose shapeliness might have been copied by a sculptor for a statue of Venus, made up a bewildering sum total of attractions. She was graceful in her movements and modest in her demeanor, and the musical tones of her soft low voice completed the captivation that had been begun by her beauty. At least, it did in the case of Josiah Deane. Before he had finished his glass of sherry, he was struck with an overwhelming admiration for the dazzling English girl, and he left the establishment, dazed and troubled as he had never been before by the intoxicating influence of the charms of a fair woman. He retained sufficient clear-headedness and prudence, however, to make all needful inquiries respecting the young lady's character and antecedents before making any confession of his sudden passion. The result was wholly satisfactory. In spite of the compromising nature of her occupation, Lizzie Willis was a good and honorable girl. She had only accepted the post in the refreshment-rooms at the Exhibition as a means of providing for an invalid mother, whom she entirely supported on her slender earnings, and she had always comported herself with so much dignity and modesty in her trying position as to win the respect of all her fellow-employés. One and all spoke of her in the highest terms. So, before the Exhibition had closed its doors, Miss Willis resigned her place, there was a quiet wedding at a mouldy old church near the British Museum in London, and the superb English beauty entered upon a new phase of life as the wife of an American millionaire.

As may well be imagined, Mrs. Deane's first aspirations in life were abundantly realized. She out-dressed and out-dazzled all her former friends and acquaintances. She accompanied her husband to the United

States, and quite lighted up the great opera-houses of the different cities with the splendor of her jewels and the gorgeousness of her truly British toilettes, which included green satin gowns trimmed with gold fringe, and crimson velvet robes bordered with ermine, and such like elegancies. Then she came back to Europe and made the grand tour of the Continent with her indulgent husband, always occupying the grandest suites of rooms in the largest and most expensive hotels, and startling her fellow-travelers with her sumptuous gowns and ornaments, as she had done Mr. Deane's fellow-citizens at home. But, after a while, she got tired of the commonplace glories of such a life. And, after the birth of a little daughter, which took place in Paris in the year succeeding her marriage, she decided to settle down and make a home for herself, a decision in which Mr. Deane was quite ready to acquiesce. He was delighted with the advent of his little daughter, his first-born child, and he was ready to do anything to further the wishes of the wife to whom he owed such an inestimable boon.

Now, Mrs. Deane, though her parents and relatives had been and were factory-hands in Yorkshire, was neither a wholly uneducated woman nor yet a fool: she was, on the contrary, possessed of a considerable amount of intelligence and of strength of character as well. During her travels, after her marriage, she had learned a good deal respecting society and its laws. She had become ambitious of a social position. She started to fit herself for her new station in real earnest. She took lessons from all sorts of masters, and watched with unceasing care over her pronunciation of the English language, being especially careful always to place her h's aright. She fitted up the elegant house she had induced her husband to purchase in Paris, with a taste which was the result of orders to the best upholsterers. She discarded her startling British gowns and sought for elegant attire at the first establishments of Paris, yielding strict obedience to the directions of their accomplished directors, though rather amazed that her millions bought her nothing more startling in the way of colors and trimmings than pale silver-grays and delicate lilacs, fine hand-embroideries and costly laces. She pined inwardly for her beloved greens and

crimson, but was sufficiently wise to yield her own dictum in matters of taste to those that ruled the taste in dress of the civilized world. Thus she gradually emerged from her chrysalis a very dainty and exquisite butterfly of fashion.

But, unfortunately, all her efforts were of no avail: English and American society would have none of the ex-barmaid. The scent of the sandwiches and the draught-ale hung around her Worth dresses and her priceless diamonds, and pervaded like a subtle exhalation her gorgeous drawing-rooms, and lent a flavor to her most sumptuous dinners. She gave grand balls, the invitations to which were hawked about among all the English-speaking residents in Paris as ices are handed round on trays to the guests at a soirée. It was all in vain: the people that she wanted to come staid at home, and refrained from even paying their party-calls. The people that did come were those that had never had any social position, or who, once having had it, had forfeited it for serious reasons. A certain number of titled and fashionable Frenchmen did indeed accept her invitations; but they danced at her balls, and ate her suppers, and had her superb horses trotted out for their inspection when wearied of the mazes of the waltz and the german, finding that the cool seclusion of the stables afforded a pleasant change after the heat and heavy scents and impure air of the ball-rooms. But they never brought their sisters or mothers to call, and these superb entertainments advanced Mrs. Deane not one whit further in her upward climb toward the higher region of society than her dresses and diamonds had done.

She was a good deal puzzled as to what her next step should be. She tried very hard to induce Mr. Deane to purchase for himself a title. She had heard of American marquisates gained by right of purchase, and she would not have objected in the least to becoming, by dint of sundry thousands of dollars judiciously invested, the Marchioness or perhaps even the Duchess Deane. But her husband, though the most indulgent of spouses, had prejudices, and he had a very strong one against bought titles in general and one for himself in particular. "No, Lizzie—no," he was wont to say, when his handsome wife besieged him with prayers

and coaxings to induce him to grant this request. "I'll buy anything else for you that you like—houses, horses, gowns, or gems—but a title I'll never pay down one dollar for. It would only make us ridiculous in the eyes of the world. It's nonsensical and un-American, and I'll have none of it. Cut me a sandwich as you used to do in the good old times, and let me hear no more about such an absurdity." This finale usually sent Mrs. Deane to her boudoir in tears; but all her lamentations and all her persuasions were powerless to change her husband's determination.

There was one card still left to her, and that one she resolved to play, and so warily and with such good effect that she was certain of winning with it the game she had been studying for so long. Alice Deane, her daughter and only child, was growing fast to womanhood. She was tall and fair and slender and graceful; not a dazzling beauty as her mother had been, but a sweet womanly girl of singular gravity and seriousness of character, inherited probably from the New England side of her paternal ancestry. She had been educated with the utmost care, and her expanding intellect gave promise of a brilliant degree of intelligence when her mental powers should have become fully developed. And, above all, and what was of more consequence than anything else in the eyes of European society, was the fact that she was sole heiress to her father's millions.

The Deane Hair-Dye would prove a stepping-stone, to win for the daughter of its inventor a position in any one of the proud old families of Europe. Mrs. Deane need not have exulted, as she did in secret, over the growing charms and accomplishments of her fair young daughter. The object that she had in view—namely, an alliance with some one of the leading families of the European aristocracy—could have been attained quite as well had Alice been a pig-faced female like the heroine of the old popular story, or a being as vicious as the American women that figure in recent specimens of American fiction, and which exist, we sincerely hope and trust, nowhere else. All that was needed to enable her to make a magnificent marriage was the wealth of her father—a good portion to be settled upon her at once, and the rest to become her own property hereafter: or rather, that of her titled husband,

whoever he might be. So Mrs. Deane felt, as she gazed at the girlish bloom and gentle graces of her charming daughter, that here at last she held in her grasp a certainty of success, so far as her social aspirations were concerned. The mother-in-law of a French duke or an English viscount of high degree and antique lineage could not well be ignored by European society in general, and by the American and English colonies in the various European capitals in particular. So

Mrs. Deane awaited with breathless eagerness the completion of her daughter's education and her subsequent introduction into society. She knew enough presentable people to make up quite a pretty little party on the occasion, and there were two or three match-making old ladies, one of them an American married to a French baron, who would be sure to be on the look-out for a titled husband for the new American heiress.

[END OF PART FIRST.]

THE RIVER AND I.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

THE river goes drifting past me, on toward the great wide sea,
Dallying here with the lilies, and there with the wind and bee;
Whispering low to the rushes and reeds by the eddy's edge,
Where the plover's nest is hidden deep in the cool green sedge:
So, idle and aimless ever, it drifts to the great wide sea,
And is lost at last in the ocean—and it is a type of me.

My life goes drifting on seaward, like a river, with the years,
And it has so much of sunshine that there is need of tears;
I am drifting idly onward, and I throw the hours away—
For an hour is counted squandered if no good is done, they say:
So, if I do nothing helpful to myself or those with me,
My life will be counted a failure as it drifts to the unknown sea.

If the force in the idle river could be made to work for men,
As it floats on to the ocean to come not back again,
By turning the busy mill-wheel on its green and pleasant edge,
Instead of its idle drifting past lily and reed and sedge,
Then, as it neared the ocean and was merged in the mighty flood,
They would say of the little river: "It has done the best it could."

I will rouse from my drifting and dreaming, a leaf on the tide of time;
I will force the power within me to deeds which, if not sublime,
Shall be something helpful and cheering to those I meet in the way;
I will be no more like the river, but do what I can each day;
And, when to the dear God's New World I drift o'er the great gray sea,
Let "He did his best" be spoken by those who come after me.

LIFE'S EVENTS.

THE various notes that make the perfect song
Have each a different length: some full and strong
And reaching up to an impassioned height,
And others low and sweet, with not less might

Because the measure is filled out with silence: so
With life's events, God's will marked out doth grow
From passages of triumph and of pain
Into the rounded sweetness of the finished strain.

M A D E M O I S E L L E D E S C U D É R Y.

BY MRS. IMOGEN B. OAKLEY.

THROWN by the circumstances of her birth among the bourgeoisie, and by her talents into the cultivated circle of the Hotel de Rambouillet, Madeleine de Scudéry was familiar with every degree and phase of French society.

The Scudéries claimed noble blood; but, unfortunately, the loftiest pedigree cannot be relied upon to produce business capacity, and Madeleine's father, dying in his daughter's early childhood, left a widow and two children to contend against a poverty caused wholly by his own mismanagement. Madame de Scudéry, from whom her children evidently inherited their talent, devoted herself to them with such self-forgetful care that she died before either one had shown any indication of future celebrity.

Through the patronage of a friend, the boy, George, secured a commission in the army, while Madeleine was adopted by an uncle living in Normandy. This kind guardian soon observed the lively imagination and excellent memory of his ward, and, being an educated man in easy circumstances, lost no time in putting her under the care of the best masters. She learned with avidity all that was deemed suitable for a girl of her rank in life, profiting largely, all the time, by her daily intercourse with the little coterie of educated men who frequented her uncle's house.

Just as she reached womanhood, the sudden death of her uncle made her once more homeless and penniless.

Her brother, in the meantime, had left the army and established himself in Paris, where, owing more to the patronage of Richelieu than to his own ability, he had acquired some little reputation as a poet and a dramatist. He invited Madeleine to share his home, and she was soon domiciled in the Rue de Beance, a short street still in existence. That she might be able to bear her part of the expenses of their humble household, she endeavored to assist in the literary work. Together the brother and sister wrote

romances, which happily struck the public fancy and became immensely popular. George, whose inventive faculty was wonderfully fertile, furnished the adventures and situations, which he left his sister to clothe in words and embellish with conversations, portraits, and sentiment. George was proud of his sister's ability and boasted of it no little, as well he might, for it was plainly her share of their joint labor that touched the popular heart; but he was a severe taskmaster, and kept her constantly at work.

"She had a strange patience," wrote one of her friends, "and I can scarcely comprehend how she was able to bear all she did."

Her life with her uncle had given Madeleine an ardent love for society, and, whenever she could elude her brother's vigilance, she would slip off for a draught of its forbidden pleasures. Madame de Rambouillet bade the unfriended girl warmly welcome to her salon, in which shade of witty conversation and polite society she soon became a favorite.

The interest taken by Madame de Rambouillet in the fortunes of the Scudéries secured for George an excellent Government position in Marseilles. Madeleine remained in Paris—her own mistress at last. She entered eagerly into all the diversions of society, passing her time in promenades, visits, and evening parties; yet, strange to say, with no diminution of her literary activity. No one ever saw her at work; no one could tell when she wrote; yet she poured forth volume after volume, to the astonishment of her friends and the admiration of the public.

After the close of the Hotel de Rambouillet, she threw open her own modest little house as a rallying-place for the dispersed précieuses.

"Mademoiselle de Scudéry has taken Saturday to receive her friends," says one of the numerous memoir-writers of the time. "She is then at home to the literati, trained like herself in the school of Madame de Rambouillet, welcoming with them other

men of letters, less celebrated perhaps, but still estimable, together with many ladies, *bourgeoise* it is true, but rich and spirituelle."

Mademoiselle de Scudéry's many verbose romances have fallen into an oblivion so profound that it is useless to recall even their names, the only one ever spoken of being "Cyrus the Great," her longest and most ambitious work. In it, she has given us a veritable portrait-gallery of the seventeenth century. Under fictitious names, she has described the persons and adventures of all those famous men and women who adorned the society of that brilliant epoch. Though the names of persons and places were supplied by her own fertile fancy, the portraits were too true to be easily mistaken, and we can imagine the interest that was awakened as volume after volume appeared, full of these thinly disguised personalities. It became a guarantee of social position to be mentioned in the book, and we read that many persons offered Mademoiselle de Scudéry heavy bribes in order that their names might not be forgotten. It is needless to say that she rejected such offers contemptuously, for, to a keen sense of honor, she united the whim of never speaking of her books nor allowing them to be mentioned to her.

In thus delineating the celebrities of her age, Mademoiselle de Scudéry did not forget herself. She had a great difficulty to surmount in this task, for all heroines must be beautiful, while she was unmistakably homely and fully aware of the fact, as is shown in the following little quatrain, which she addressed to the artist Nanteuil, to whom she had sat for a portrait:

"Nanteuil, your genius and skill
Are facts that no one can disprove—
For the eyes which I hate in my mirror,
Your picture has taught me to love."

It is interesting to observe, therefore, how she speaks of herself, which she does under the name of Sappho.

"When I say that you would have heard Sappho spoken of as one of the most charming women of Greece, you must not understand that she was a great beauty, or that it was impossible for the eye of envy to detect a fault. Sappho's chief claim to beauty lay in her eyes"—she was evidently looking at Nanteuil's portrait, instead of her mirror—"for they were so brilliant and full of fire

that one could scarcely support their gaze. Sappho had, moreover, an oval face, a pretty mouth, and hands so beautiful that hearts were but as playthings in their grasp—hands worthy of a daughter of the muses, and fit to cull the choicest flowers of Parnassus."

She speaks of her mental gifts in much the same strain.

"At the age of twelve, Sappho's esprit and judgment were the astonishment of her friends. What she could not understand could be understood by no one. There is nothing that she does not know."

Strange as it may seem to our ideas, such warm self-laudation did not seem indelicate to either Madeleine or her friends. Ladies of the highest rank and virtue were accustomed thus to draw their own portraits and descant freely upon the beauties of their minds and persons.

The popularity of Mademoiselle de Scudéry's romances spread to London, for Pepys records in his diary that his wife, on one occasion, was deeply absorbed in the fascinating pages of "Cyrus."

Notwithstanding her grandiloquent style, which was a fault of the age, Mademoiselle de Scudéry was a woman of the simplest manners. She was kind, sympathetic, and generous to a fault. When, in 1671, she received the prize for eloquence from the French Academy, her many female friends testified their love by presenting her with a laurel wreath exquisitely wrought in gold.

A constant guest at the "Saturdays" was Madame Cormuel, a wealthy *bourgeoise*, whose witticisms were widely quoted. She had once been deputed to find a tutor for the family of a friend living in the country; he was to be handsome, learned, witty, modest, well-bred, and of excellent family. She wrote, shortly after: "I am still on the lookout for such a man as you describe, and, when I find him, I shall—marry him!"

Mademoiselle de Scudéry early announced her intention of remaining single, and she adhered to her resolution to the end of her life. It was no dislike of men that caused this decision, but, as she said herself—with a vivid remembrance, doubtless, of her brother's rule—she never could reconcile herself to the thought of losing her liberty.

She died in 1701, having recorded the doings of French society for nearly one hundred years.